



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

ROY COOPER • Governor

KODY H. KINSLEY • Secretary

LISA TUCKER CAULEY • Division Director, Human Services

May 2, 2024

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**ATTENTION: DIRECTORS, CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS, MANAGERS,
SUPERVISORS, AND CHILD WELFARE STAFF**

SUBJECT: SUN Bucks (also known as Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (S-EBT))

REQUIRED ACTION: Information Only Time Sensitive Immediate

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND: SUN Bucks Information for Awareness & Requested Action

The North Carolina Division of Social Services (NCDSS) is releasing this letter to announce the implementation of a new USDA Summer EBT food assistance program called SUN Bucks.

GENERAL INFORMATION

USDA created a new, permanent food assistance program for children called SUN Bucks, also known as Summer EBT. NC will launch SUN Bucks in 2024 to provide school-age children with grocery-buying benefits for the summer period when school is not in session. Children who qualify will receive a one-time payment of \$120 for the summer period. SUN Bucks will be delivered on EBT cards and can be used to purchase groceries at retailers that accept EBT. This program is estimated to reach nearly 1 million children in 2024.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (PL 117-328) (the Act) authorized a permanent, nationwide Summer EBT program beginning in 2024. The Act gives the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture authority to issue guidance and approve State agency plans.

The NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the NC Department of Public Instruction (DPI) have collaborated to administer the new program in 2024. SUN Bucks is different than the federally funded, temporary P-EBT program designed to provide benefits to purchase foods for students and young children during COVID-19. The P-EBT program ended in 2023.

Many children will be automatically eligible for SUN Bucks, but some will need to apply. An online application will be made available during May 2024. Eligibility Notices will not be mailed. Instead, they will be distributed via email, text, and robocall. Families should be encouraged to review the notice for important information about SUN Bucks. The Eligibility Notice can be found online ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#)). Please also print this notice and deliver it to families with the SUN Bucks card.

SUN Bucks issuances will occur every two weeks from late June through September as new children are determined eligible. Most children who automatically qualify will get the benefit in June.

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES

LOCATION: 820 S. Boylan Avenue, McBryde Building, Raleigh, NC 27603

MAILING ADDRESS: 2401 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2401

www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: XXX-XXX-XXXX • FAX: 919-334-1018

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Important information about SUN Bucks cards for children in foster care:

- New SUN Bucks cards will be mailed for all students identified as children in foster care.
- The cards will be issued in the student's name and will not be grouped together with multiple children.
- SUN Bucks cards will be mailed to the local county DSS office with custody of the child in foster care.
- **The student's foster care social worker will provide the card or assist with transfer of the card to the student's placement provider, whether that is a family foster home or congregate care setting. It is imperative that the child's foster care social worker facilitates the transfer of the card with the child should they change caregivers.**
- The FAQs provide additional information about where cards will be sent, and can be viewed [HERE](#).

The Division of Child and Family Well Being (DCFV) is hosting two SUN Bucks webinars for child welfare staff. Registration information can be found below:

- Wednesday, May 29th at 1:00pm: Register [here](#)
- Tuesday, June 4th at 9:00am: Register [here](#)

Attached to this guidance is the Eligibility Notice to be printed and delivered to families with their preloaded SUN Bucks card. More information on the new SUN Bucks program including frequently asked questions, an informational flyer, a toolkit and additional resources can be found at www.ncdhhs.gov/sunbucks.

Sincerely,



Adrian W. Daye

Deputy Director for Child Welfare Practice
Division of Social Services, Child Welfare
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

Cc: Lisa Tucker Cauley, Division Director of Human Services
Kathy Stone, Section Chief for Safety and Prevention Services
Kimaree Sanders, Section Chief for Regulatory and Licensing
Peter West, Section Chief for County Operations

ATTACHMENT: Eligibility Notice – English and Spanish

CWS-35-2024

Dear Parent / Guardian:

You are receiving this notice because **one or more children in your household have qualified for a new federal food assistance program called SUN Bucks**, which helps families buy groceries during the summer when school is out. The qualifying child(ren) will automatically be enrolled in the program, so **you do not need to apply**. Please note that each child is evaluated for eligibility individually, and not all children in your household may be eligible. Visit www.ncdhhs.gov/sunbucks for information on what qualifies a child for SUN Bucks.

You will receive a one-time \$120 benefit for each eligible child on a card that you can use to buy nutritious food at grocery stores, farmers markets, and other EBT-authorized retailers. If you receive more than \$120 per eligible child in your household, do not use the benefits, and contact the SUN Bucks call center at **1-866-719-0141** as soon as possible.

If you have an active Food and Nutrition Services (FNS, food stamps) case, your SUN Bucks benefits will be loaded on your existing card. If you **do not** have an active FNS case, you will be mailed a SUN Bucks card.

- *If you have Work First (TANF, cash assistance), Cherokee Tribal Food Distribution Program (CTFDP), or Medicaid:* Your card will be mailed to the address associated with those benefits.
- *If you do not get FNS, TANF, CTFDP, or Medicaid, but your child is approved to get Free or Reduced-Price meals at school:* Your card will be mailed to the address on file with your child's school.
- *If you are in foster care:* Your card will be mailed to your DSS office, and your caseworker will help get it to you.

Note: Not all CEP school children will be eligible, and some may need to apply. Visit www.ncdhhs.gov/sunbucks for information.

SUN Bucks benefits will begin to go out in June, but children will see their benefits throughout the summer once determined eligible. SUN Bucks **cards will be mailed as quickly as possible between June and August**. Children whose benefits are attached to active FNS cards will see their SUN Bucks benefits available in their FNS accounts within 10 days of issuance. Benefits expire 122 days after issuance, so make sure to use your benefits during the summer. Receiving SUN Bucks will not affect children or families' immigration status.

How to Activate a New Card OR Order a New Card if you Have Lost or Destroyed Your SUN Bucks Card:

The card works just like a debit card. Before using your card, you must first activate it and select a Personal Identification Number (PIN). There are three ways to activate your card, check your balance and replace your card:

1. Visit www.ebtEDGE.com. Under "EBT Cardholder," click on "More Information." Login or Register here.
2. Download and use the ebtEDGE mobile app (can be downloaded on Google Play or Apple Store).
3. Call **1-888-622-7328** and follow the prompts.

IMPORTANT: Your PIN activation code will be the date of birth (DOB) of a child in your household. **Try the DOB for each student in your household, starting with the youngest.** Enter the DOB using two digits for the month, two digits for the day, and four digits for the year. For example, if the date of birth is June 1, 2008, you would enter 06012008.

Examples of items you CAN buy with SUN Bucks	Examples of items you CANNOT buy with SUN Bucks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breads, cereals, fruits, and vegetables • Meats, fish, poultry, and dairy products • Bottled water and non-alcoholic beverages. • Seeds and plants that produce food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beer, wine, liquor, cigarettes, or tobacco • Any nonfood items, such as: pet foods, soaps, household supplies, vitamins, and medicine • Hot or pre-prepared foods

Please note that selling benefits for cash is illegal and punishable by criminal prosecution. If you have questions, or would like to opt out of these benefits, please call **1-866-719-0141** and press Option 2. Please visit North Carolina's SUN Bucks website at www.ncdhhs.gov/sunbucks for SUN Bucks information, FAQs, and updates.

See here for the [USDA Non-Discrimination Statement](#). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Estimados padres o tutores:

Recibes este aviso porque **uno o más niños en tu hogar han calificado para un nuevo programa federal de asistencia alimentaria llamado SUN Bucks**, cual ayuda a las familias a comprar comestibles durante el verano cuando no hay clases. El (los) hijo(s) calificado(s) se inscribirá(n) automáticamente en el programa, por lo que **no es necesario que presente(n) una solicitud**. Ten en cuenta que cada niño es evaluado individualmente para determinar su elegibilidad, y es posible que no todos los niños de tu hogar sean elegibles. Visita el sitio web: www.ncdhhs.gov/sunbucks para obtener información sobre lo que califica a un niño para SUN Bucks.

Recibirás un beneficio único de \$120 por cada niño elegible en una tarjeta que se puede usar para comprar alimentos nutritivos en tiendas de comestibles, mercados de agricultores y otros minoristas autorizados por EBT. Si recibes un monto más de \$120 por niño elegible en tu hogar, no uses los beneficios y comunícate con el centro de llamadas de SUN Bucks al **1-866-719-0141** lo antes posible.

Si tienes un caso activo de Servicios de Alimentos y Nutrición (FNS, cupones de alimentos), los beneficios de SUN Bucks se depositarán en tu tarjeta existente. Si **no** tienes un caso de FNS activo, se te enviará por correo una tarjeta SUN Bucks.

- *Si tienes Work First (TANF, asistencia en efectivo), Programa de Distribución de Alimentos Tribales Cherokee (CTFDP) o Medicaid:* Tu tarjeta se enviará por correo a la dirección asociada con esos beneficios.
- *Si no recibes FNS, TANF, CTFDP o Medicaid, pero tu niño está aprobado para recibir comidas gratuitas o a precio reducido en la escuela:* Su tarjeta se enviará por correo a la dirección registrada en la escuela de tu niño.
- *Si estás en cuidado de crianza temporal:* Tu tarjeta se enviará por correo a tu oficina del Departamento de Servicios Sociales (DSS) y tu trabajador social ayudará a recibirla.

Nota: No todos los escolares del CEP serán elegibles, y es posible que algunos deban presentar una solicitud. Visita el sitio web: www.ncdhhs.gov/sunbucks para obtener información.

Los beneficios de SUN Bucks comenzarán a salir en junio, pero los niños verán sus beneficios durante todo el verano una vez que se determine que son elegibles. Las tarjetas SUN Bucks **se enviarán por correo lo más rápido posible entre junio y agosto**. Los niños cuyos beneficios estén vinculados a tarjetas FNS activas verán sus beneficios de SUN Bucks disponibles en sus cuentas FNS dentro de los 10 días posteriores a la emisión. Los beneficios se vencen 122 días después de su emisión, así que asegúrate de usarlos durante el verano. Recibir SUN Bucks no afectará el estado migratorio de los niños o las familias.

Cómo activar una nueva tarjeta SUN Bucks O pedir una nueva tarjeta si la has perdido o destruido:

La tarjeta funciona igual que una tarjeta de débito. Antes de utilizar tu tarjeta, primero debes activarla y seleccionar un número de identificación personal (PIN). Hay tres formas de activar tu tarjeta para verificar tu saldo y reemplazar tu tarjeta:

1. Visita el sitio web: www.ebtEDGE.com. En "Titular de la tarjeta EBT", haz clic en "Más información". Accede o regístrate aquí.
2. Descarga y utiliza la aplicación móvil ebtEDGE (se puede descargar en Google Play o Apple Store).
3. Llama al **1-888-622-7328** y sigue las indicaciones.

IMPORTANTE: Tu código de activación PIN será la fecha de nacimiento (DOB) de un niño en tu hogar. **Prueba la fecha de nacimiento de cada estudiante de tu hogar, empezando por el más joven.** Introduce la fecha de nacimiento usando dos números para el mes, dos números para el día y cuatro números para el año. Por ejemplo, si la fecha de nacimiento es 1 de junio de 2008, ingresarías 06012008.

Ejemplos de artículos que PUEDES comprar con SUN BUCKS	Ejemplos de artículos que NO PUEDES comprar con SUN BUCKS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cereales, frutas y verduras • Carnes, pescado, aves y productos lácteos • Agua embotellada y bebidas no alcohólicas. • Semillas y plantas que producen alimentos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cerveza, vino, licor, cigarrillos o tabaco • Cualquier artículo no alimentario, como: alimentos para mascotas, jabones, artículos para el hogar, vitaminas y medicamentos • Alimentos calientes o preparados

Ten en cuenta que vender beneficios por dinero en efectivo es ilegal y punible con enjuiciamiento penal. Si tienes alguna pregunta o quieres dejar de recibir estos beneficios, llama al **1-866-719-0141** y oprime Opción 2. Visita el sitio web de



SUN Bucks de Carolina del Norte en www.ncdhhs.gov/sunbucks para obtener información, preguntas frecuentes y actualizaciones sobre SUN Bucks.

Consulta aquí la [Declaración de no discriminación del Departamento de Agricultura de los EE.UU. \(USDA\)](#). Esta institución ofrece igualdad de oportunidades.